

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 208416

FOLLOWING REPEAT AMMAN 5479 ACTION SECSTATE 19 SEP

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 5479

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, US, JO

SUBJ: TITLE I WHEAT

1. IN RECENT DAYS, WE HAVE HAD A SERIES OF MEETINGS AT THE REQUEST OF PM AND OTHER GOJ OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS THIS YEARS TITLE I WHEAT PROGRAM. GOJ HAS OFFICIALLY REQUESTED 80,000 TONS OF WHEST, APPEALING FOR DELIVERING OF 20,000 M.T. NO LATER THAN DEC 1.

2. AS SHOWN BELOW, THE GOJ SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION FIGURES RESULT IN A DEFICIT OF 40,000 M.T. BUT PROVIDE FOR NO CARRY-OVER STOCKS.

SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION TABLE
WHEAT AND FLOUR
PERIOD JULY 1, 1974 -
JUNE 30, 1975 (000 M.T.)

A. SUPPLY 000 M.T.

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1) ACTUAL STOCK JULY 1 8

2) PRODUCTION	180
3) IMPORTS	119
A) PL 480 TITLE I	22
B) UNRWA	50
C) SUPREME MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE	10
D) WORLD FOOD PROGRAM	18
E) CHARITABLE SOCIETIES	2
F) COMMERCIAL	17
TOTAL	307

B. DISTRIBUTION

1) FOOD CONSUMPTION (1.85 X 150KGS)	277
2) SEEDS	25
3) FEED STOCK	30
4) EXPORTS TO NORTH SAUDI ARABIA	10
5) TRANSFERS TO W. BANK	5
TOTAL	347

C. DEFICIT	40
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NOTE TO B. DISTRIBUTION 1) FOOD DISTRIBUTION - KGS.

GOJ PREVIOUSLY USED 140 KTS. PER PERSON PER YEAR, NEWLY ESTABLISHED SUPPLY MINISTER REACHED A CONCLUSION THAT 140 KTS. IS LOW AND 150 KGS IS MORE REALISTIC AND IS WHAT SYRIA USES. MISSION CONCURS.

3. BASED ON OUR REVIEW OF ABOVE FIGURES, GOJ'S REQUEST OF 80,000 M.T. APPEARS OVERSTATED. NEVERTHELESS, WE DO BELIEVE A PROGRAM OF UP TO 40,000 M.T. WILL BE JUSTIFIED AND HAVE SO INFORMED THE MIN OF SUPPLY. THIS AMOUNT WOULD PERMIT A CARRY-OVER OF 20,000 TONS (ONE-MONTHS CONSUMPTION).

4. WHILE PRODUCTION IS RELATIVELY HIGH, THE GOJ IS EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTY IN GETTING FARMERS TO SELL AT THE GOVERNMENT PRICE OF 55 JDS M.T. - ONLY A LITTLE BELOW WORLD PRICES. THE GOJ BELIEVES THE FARMERS ARE HOLDING OUT FOR HIGHER PRICES. WITH LOW STOCKS IN THE HAND OF THE GOVERNMENT AND MILLERS AND LITTLE CHANCE OF FARMERS SALES INCREASING UNTIL WINTER RAINS BEGIN, THE GOJ WANTS IMMEDIATE DELIVERY OF SOME 10,000 MT WHEAT FROM OUTSIDE
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SOURCES AND THE MINISTER OF SUPPLY HAS JUST SUCCESSFULLY NEGOTIATED FOR THIS AMOUNT WITH THE SYRIANS. THIS SHOULD EASE THE SITUATION FOR SOME WEEKS. HOWEVER, AND INTERNAL DISTRIBUTION PROBLEM WILL EXIST UNTIL THE RAINY SEASON WHEN FARMERS NO LONGER WILL BE ABLE TO HOLD GRAIN. THUS, THE PM CONTINUES TO PRESS US HARD FOR EARLY DELIVERING AS WELL. SINCE WE ARE CONVINCED THERE IS A CASE FOR PERHAPS 40,000 MT, WE ASK WASHINGTON FOR 20,000 MT AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE WITH THE REST TO ARRIVE LATER.

IF DECISIONS WERE TAKEN RAPIDLY, DELIVERY COULD TAKE PLACE HOPEFULLY BY 1 DECEMBER. EARLY DECISION ALSO HAS POLITICAL RELEVANCE HERE IN VIEW HEAVY PUBLICITY GIVEN IN JORDAN TO USG INITIAL DECISION TO SUPPORT EGYPT WITH 100,000 TONS, WITH APPARENTLY MORE TO FOLLOW.

5. SUGGEST THIS MATTER BE DISCUSSED WITH AID REP. SIMMONS CURRENTLY IN WASHINGTON. ADVISE SOONEST. PICKERING UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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